

Using the 'official facts', many journalists fighting deadlines filed copy which portrayed a man who did not exist. The Economist, to take one of several hundred examples, said of the new Pope, 'He would not be much at home in the company of Dr Hans Kung.' Research would have revealed that Luciani and Hans Kung had exchanged very friendly letters as well as sending one another books. Further research would have shown that Luciani had several times quoted Kung favourably in his sermons. Virtually every newspaper and periodical in the world that carried profiles of the new Pope made similar totally erroneous assertions.

LC43

FELICI Your Holiness, we came here to discuss the details of your coronation.

JOHN PAUL: I have been thinking about that too. The coronation ceremony needs to be rewritten.

VILLOT; It has not changed for hundreds of years.

JOHN PAUL: (Softly) There will be no crowning.

VILLOT Impossible ... the Pope is always crowned.

JOHN PAUL: I am a priest, not a king. There will be no crown.....And I walk into Saint Peter's

FELICI The Pope is always carried by eight men in a parade on a platform...

JOHN PAUL: (Gently) I will not be carried on the backs of men

VINCENZA enters with a tray of coffee. She is helped by MONSIGNOR MAGEE.

VICENZA: The kitchen sent up some coffee. I tasted it Father, it's terrible. Shall I send it back ?

VILLOT Sister Vicenza should really refer to you as Your Holiness or Holy Father.

JOHN PAUL *Sister Vincenza has very fixed views. I would not change them for the world.*

VILLOT: Holy Father, you should use the royal "we" when you speak.

JOHN PAUL *(Slightly irritated) I am a priest. I will speak as a priest.*

LC47.

BENELLI *It was as if a thousand years of dust and ceremonies had vanished overnight.....*

One week later the coronation ceremony took place. Except it was no longer a coronation. The ceremony, over a thousand years old, was completely rewritten. The three-crowned tiara was gone.

In its place, he wore a simple cloth mitre, the symbol of pastoral authority. For a thousand years the Pope had been carried on a throne to the sound of trumpets. The throne was gone, the trumpets were silent, instead he came on foot, through his people.

IGN149/150

On August 28th the beginning of his Papal revolution was announced. It took the form of a Vatican statement that there was to be no coronation, that the new Pope refused to be crowned. There would be no sedia gestatoria, the chair used to carry the Pope, no tiara encrusted with emeralds, rubies, sapphires and diamonds. No ostrich feathers, no six-hour ceremony. In short the ritual with which the Church demonstrated that it still lusted after temporal power was abolished. Albino Luciani had been obliged to engage in long, tedious argument with the Vatican traditionalists before his wishes prevailed.

Luciani, who never once used the royal "we", the ceremonial first person plural, was determined that the royal Papacy with its appointments of cardinals, bishops should be replaced by a church which resembled the concepts of its founder. The coronation became a simple Mass. The absurdity of a

swaying Pontiff reminiscent of a Caliph from the Arabian Nights was supplanted by a supreme Pastor, quietly walking up the steps of the altar. With that gesture, Pontiff abolished a thousand years of history and moved the Church a little farther back down the road towards Jesus Christ.

The triple-headed, bee-hive-shaped tiara was superseded by the pallium, a white shawl draped around the Pope's shoulders. The monarch had made way for the shepherd. The era of the poor Church had officially begun.

LC44/45

JOHN PAUL *What else would you like to discuss ?*

VILLOT *(Consulting an agenda) There is a request for an audience. The United States Congressional Committee on Population has requested a meeting with Your Holiness.*

JOHN PAUL *When would they like to meet.*

VILLOT *That is the problem. If you meet it will send the wrong message to Catholics around the world. The Committee supports artificial birth control.*

JOHN PAUL *stands and picks up a rolled map and starts to spread it across his desk.*

JOHN PAUL *This is a map of the world (As he puts a book at each end of the map to hold it flat, the two cardinals join him) There are Catholics in almost every country of the world. This year the world population reached four point four billion. Over the next year seventy- three million children will be born, most of them in the Third World. Every hour one thousand children under the age of five die of malnutrition. By this time tomorrow thirty-thousand children will be dead. Yes, I will meet with the committee.*

VILLOT *Is your Holiness suggesting that Pope Paul's encyclical on birth control is wrong?*

JOHN PAUL *Pope Paul did not invoke the doctrine of papal infallibility when he signed the encyclical. The issue needs further study.*

FELICI *The issue was needed*

JOHN PAUL *And the report of ninety per cent of the commission favoured permitting some form of artificial birth control. Pope Paul was talked into rejecting the commission's report. I am not bound by his decision. (TO VILLOT) I want a report on every Third World country that has Catholics and I want it before I meet with the congressional committee.*

VILLOT *That will take months.*

JOHN PAUL *I intend to meet with the committee as soon as possible. There are three thousand employees in the Curia. Use whoever you need.*

IGN 155/6/7/8/9

What certain sections of the Curia had realized with a profound shock was that in electing Albino Luciani, the cardinals had given them a man who would not let the issue of birth control rest with Humanae Vitae. Careful study by members of the Curia of what Luciani had actually said, not only to his parishioners in public but to his friends and colleagues in private, quickly established that the new Pope favoured artificial birth control. The inaccurate and false picture L'Osservatore Romano painted of a man who rigorously applied the principles of Humanae Vitae was the opening shot in a counter-attack designed to hem Albino Luciani inside the strictures of his predecessor's encyclical. It was quickly followed by another blast.

The Press Agency UPI discovered that Luciani had been in favour of a Vatican ruling which would allow artificial birth control. Italian newspapers also carried stories referring to the Luciani document sent to Pope Paul by Cardinal Urbani of Venice in which the strong recommendation in favour of the contraceptive pill had been made. The Curia speedily located Father Henri de Riedmatten who had been secretary to the Papal Birth Control Commission. He described the reports that Luciani had been opposed to an encyclical that condemned artificial birth control as 'a fantasy'. Riedmatten also asserted that Luciani had never been a member of the Commission, which was accurate. He then went on to deny that Luciani had ever written a

letter or a report on the subject that had been sent to Pope Paul.

This denial and the manner of it is an example of the duplicity that abounds in the Curia. The Luciani document went to Rome via Cardinal Urbani and therefore had the Cardinal's imprimatur upon it. To deny that a document existed, actually signed by Luciani, was technically correct. To deny that Luciani on behalf of his fellow bishops in the Veneto region had not forwarded such a document to the Pope via the then Patriarch of Venice was an iniquitous lie.

Ironically, within the first three weeks of his Papacy, Albino Luciani had already taken the first steps towards reversing the Roman Catholic Church's position on artificial birth control. While those steps were being taken the world's Press, by courtesy of L'Osservatore Romano, Vatican Radio, and off the record briefings by certain members of the Roman Curia, had already firmly established a completely false image of Luciani's views.

During his Papacy Luciani referred to and quoted from a number of the pronouncements and encyclicals that had come from Pope Paul VI. Notably absent was any reference to Humanae Vitae. The defenders of the encyclical had first been alerted to the new Pope's views when they learned with consternation that the draft acceptance speech, which had been prepared for Paul's successor by the Secretariat of State's office, containing glowing references to Humanae Vitae, had had all such references excised by Luciani. The anti birth control element within the Vatican then discovered that in May 1978, Albino Luciani had been invited to attend and speak at an International Congress being held in Milan on June 21st-22nd. The main purpose of the Congress was to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the encyclical Humanae Vitae. Luciani had let it be known that he would not speak at the Congress and that further he would not attend. Among those who did attend and speak in glowing terms about Humanae Vitae was the Polish Cardinal Karol Wojtyla.

Now in September, while the world's Press unquestioningly repeated the lies of L'Osservatore Romano, Albino

In the Papal Apartments talking to his Secretary of State, Cardinal Villot²⁶: "I will be happy to talk to this United States Delegation on the issue. In my mind we cannot leave the situation as it currently stands."

The issue was world population. The 'situation' was Humanae Vitae. As the conversation progressed Villot heard Pope John Paul I express a view that many others, including his private secretary Father Diego Lorenzi, had heard many times before. Father Lorenzi is only one of a number of people who have been able to quote to me Luciani's exact words²⁷:

I am aware of the ovulation period in a woman with its range of fertility from twenty-four to thirty-six hours. Even if one allows a sperm life of forty-eight hours the maximum time of possible conception is less than four days. In a regular cycle this means four days of fertility and twenty-four days of infertility. Now on earth can it be a sin to say instead of twenty-four days twenty-eight days?

What had prompted this truly historic conversation had been a tentative approach to the Vatican from the American Embassy in Rome. The American Embassy had been contacted by the State Department in Washington and also by US Congressman James Scheuer. The Congressman headed a House Select Committee on Population and was also Vice-Chairman of the UN fund for population activities, inter-parliamentary working group. The story of the Luciani document to Pope Paul VI on birth control had alerted Scheuer and his Committee to the possibility of change in the Church's position on birth control. It seemed to Scheuer that it was unlikely that his group would obtain an audience with Luciani as soon as his Papacy but he still considered it worth the effort of putting pressure on the State Department and also, through the Embassy in Rome, on the Vatican. Scheuer was destined to hear some good news.

Now that Albino Luciani was wearing the shoes of the fisherman he determined to follow John's example of a revolutionary 100 days. At the top of his list of priorities of reform and change were the need to alter

²⁶ This would seem to be the basis for the scene on LC 44/45, consisting of the discussion/argument between Pope John Paul and Villot as to birth control and the proposed audience for the US Committee.

²⁷ The source for David Yallop's account of the words used by Pope John Paul was conversations between Yallop and Lorenzi, as well as between Yallop and others.

radically the Vatican's relationship with capitalism and the desire to alleviate the very real suffering he had personally witnessed that had stemmed directly from *Humanae Vitae*.

According to Cardinal Benelli, Cardinal Felici and other Vatican sources²⁸, the austere Villot listened askance as the new Pope elaborated on the problems the encyclical had caused. It was clear from his attitude during my interviews²⁹ with him that on this issue Felici was heavily in sympathy with Villot.

Only a few weeks earlier Villot had been extolling the encyclical on the tenth anniversary of its publication. In a letter to Archbishop John Quinn of San Francisco, Villot reaffirmed Paul's opposition to artificial contraception. The Secretary of State had stressed how important Paul had considered this teaching to be, that it was according to God's law.

There was much more in a similar vein. Now, less than two months later, he was obliged to listen to Paul's successor taking a revisionist position. The coffee grew cold as Luciani, rising from his desk, began to pace his study and quietly talk of some of the effects that *Humanae Vitae* had produced over the past decade.³⁰

The encyclical which had been designed to strengthen Papal authority by denying that there could be any change in the traditional teaching on birth control, had had precisely the opposite effect. The evidence was irrefutable. In Belgium, Holland, Germany, Britain, the United States and in many other countries there had not only been marked opposition to the encyclical, there had also been marked disobedience. The maxim had rapidly become that if one priest did not take a tolerant attitude within the confessional the sinner shopped around for a more liberated priest. Luciani cited examples of that contradiction he knew of personally in the Veneto region.

²⁸ Sources found and relied upon by David Yallop for his account of the meeting between Villot and Pope John Paul. IGN sets the scene of Villot's general reaction to John Paul's views on the effects of the encyclical on birth control; copied in LC.

²⁹ David Yallop interviewed Felici, who was the source for this comment. In the scene on LC 44/45, it is clear that Felici was of the same view as Villot on the subject of birth control.

³⁰ LC adopts this "scene setting" from IGN on pages LC 44/45: LC has John Paul standing up (from his desk) and uses the device of opening a map of the world to dramatise Luciani's references in IGN to the effects of the birth control encyclical across the world.

The theory of Humanae Vitae might well look like an ideal moral viewpoint when proclaimed from within the all-male preserve of the Vatican. The reality Luciani had observed in northern Italy and abroad clearly demonstrated the inhumanity of the edict. In that decade world population had increased by over three-quarters of a billion people.

When Villot demurred to point out that Pope Paul had stressed the virtues of the natural method of contraception Luciani merely smiled at him, not the full beaming smile that the public knew; it was more of a sad smile. 'Eminence, what can we old celibates really know of the sexual desires of the married?'

This conversation, the first of a number the Pope had with his Secretary of State on the subject, took place in the Pope's study in the Papal Apartments on Tuesday, September 19th³¹. They discussed the subject for nearly forty-five minutes. When the meeting ended and Villot was about to leave, Luciani walked to the door with him and said:

Eminence. We have been discussing birth control for about forty-five minutes. If the information I have been given, the various statistics, if that information is accurate, then during the period of time we have been talking, over one thousand children under the age of five have died of malnutrition. During the next forty-five minutes while you and I look forward with anticipation to our next meal, further thousand children will die of malnutrition. By this time tomorrow thirty thousand children who at this moment are alive, will be dead - of malnutrition. God does not always provide.

The Secretary of State for the Vatican was apparently unable to find an adequate exit line.

All details of the possible audience with a United States delegation, on the subject of population, were kept a carefully guarded secret both by the Vatican and the State Department. Such a meeting coming so early in Luciani's Papacy could rightly be seen as highly significant if it became known publicly.

NOTE. There are a great many pages within IGN dealing with the issue of birth control including

³¹ Again, scene setting from IGN is copied in LC.

³² IGN refers to a period of 45 minutes. LC refers to an hour.

³³ IGN refers to over 1,000 children under the age of 5 dying; LC refers to 1,000.

On pages 15 through to page 24 details of the events leading to Pope Paul's edict Humane Vitae. Pages 18 and 19 are particularly relevant when considering JOHN PAUL's second speech on LC 45.

LC46

JOHN PAUL.....Certainly I am too small for great things. But I can repeat the truth and the call of the Gospel as I did when I was a priest in my little church at home. Men need that.

IGN 185.

On September 7th, during a private audience³⁴ with Vittore Branca at 8.00 a.m., an hour that caused Curial eyebrows to shoot even higher, his friend Branca expressed concern about the weight of the Papacy. *Paul* responded: Yes, *certainly I am too small for great things. I can only repeat the truth and the call of the Gospel as I did in my little church at home. Basically all men need this, and I am the keeper of souls above all. Between the parish priest at Canale and me there is a difference only in the number of faithful but the task is the same, to remember Christ and his word.*

LC 49.

*The Pope's study. JOHN Paul enters *angry*. He is carrying a newspaper. There are large piles of paper on his desk. He is followed by LORENZI who is carrying more papers.*

JOHN PAUL: The Vatican press has changed my speech again. "We" this "we" that I never use "we". This isn't my speech. This is just official statements drafted by the Curia. They even have not celebrating the tenth anniversary of Paul's encyclical against birth control. Villot and Felici know I want to re-examine the issue.

LORENZI There is also an article condemning the birth of the recent test-tube baby.

³⁴ The audience was private and the words spoken are not therefore a matter of public record. It seems likely that they can only have been copied from IGN.

JOHN PAUL II: They know about the letter I wrote congratulating the baby. (Angry) Damn them.

IGN185/186/190/191/192

On September 26th, Luciani could look back with satisfaction on his first month in the new job. It had been a month full of powerful impact. His investigations into corrupt and dishonest practices had thrown the perpetrators into deep fear. His impatience with Curial pomposity had caused outrage. Again and again he had abandoned officially written speeches, publicly complaining: 'This is too Curial in style.' Or, 'This is far too unctuous.'

His verbatim words were rarely recorded by Vatican Radio or **Osservatore Romano**, but the public heard them and so did the other news media.

The Vatican recorded his speeches in the General Audiences when on successive Wednesdays he spoke on Faith, Hope and Charity. Luciani's pleas that these virtues be shown towards, for example, drug addicts went unrecorded by the Curia who controlled the Vatican media.

When on September 20th he uttered the memorable phrase that it is wrong to believe 'Ubi Lenin ibi Jerusalem' (where Lenin is, there is Jerusalem), the Curia announced that the Pope was rejecting 'liberation theology'. He was not. Further, Vatican Radio and **Osservatore Romano** neglected to record Luciani's important qualification, that between the Church and religious salvation, and the world and human salvation, 'There is some coincidence but we cannot make a perfect equation.'

IGN190

The first problem he tackled was **Osservatore Romano**. In the previous month, he had been given cause to complain about the paper on numerous occasions. After the battle had been won about the recent use of 'we' and 'our', which the paper had initially insisted on substituting for the Pope's use of the humble first person, each day's edition had produced further irritations for the Pope. The paper had adhered rigidly to the Curial-written speeches and ignored his own

personal comments. It even complained when Italian journalists had accurately reported what the Pope had said rather than what L'Osservatore Romano deemed he should have said. Now there were fresh problems of a far more serious nature.

A number of Curial cardinals had discovered to their horror that shortly before the Conclave Albino Luciani had been asked for his opinion on the birth of Louise Brown, known as 'the first test tube baby', an English girl recently born with the aid of artificial fertilization. Luciani had been interviewed on the subject three days before the death of Pope Paul VI but his views were not generally known until the article carried in Prospettive nel Mondo after his election. The hardliners on birth control read with growing dismay the views of the man who was now Pope.

Luciani had begun cautiously, making it clear that what he was expressing were his own personal views, because he, like everyone else, 'waited to hear what the authentic teaching of the Church would be when the experts had been consulted'. His surprise election had produced a situation in which the authentic teaching of the Church on this as on any other subject was now totally within Luciani's province.

In the interview Luciani expressed qualified enthusiasm about the birth. He was concerned about the possibility of 'baby factories', a prophetic concern in view of current events in California where women are queueing to be impregnated with the sperm of Nobel prize winners.

On a more personal note to the parents of Louise Brown, Luciani said:

IGN 191

Following the example of God, who desires and loves human life, I too would best wishes to the baby. As for her parents, I have no right to condemn them; subjectively, if they acted with good intentions and in good faith, they may even have great merit before God for what they have decided and asked the doctors to do.

He then drew attention to a previous pronouncement by Pius XII which might put the act of artificial fertilization in conflict with the

Church. Then, considering the view that every individual has the right to choose for him or herself, he expressed an opinion that lay at the heart of his attitude towards many moral problems. 'As for the individual conscience, I agree, it must always be followed, whether it commands or forbids; the individual though must seek always to develop a well-formed conscience.'

The element within the Vatican who believe that the only well-formed conscience is one formed exclusively by them began to mutter. Discreet meetings began to take place. It was clear to those who attended these meetings that Luciani had to be stopped. They talked airily of 'the betrayal of Paul', which to certain refined Roman minds is an elegant way of saying, 'I disagree'.

When news of the cautious dialogue between the Secretariat of State's office and the US State Department began to leak to this group they determined on action. The subsequent information that a delegation of officials concerned with birth control had been granted an audience with the Pope gave added urgency to those within the Vatican who considered Humanae Vitae should remain the last word on this subject.

On September 27th there appeared on the front page of L'Osservatore Romano a long article entitled 'Humanae Vitae and Catholic morality'. It was written by Cardinal Luigi Ciappi, OP, theologian to the Papal household. Cardinal Ciappi had been personal theologian to Paul VI and Pius XII. [redacted] from such an authority [redacted] the article would appear to carry the personal imprimatur of the Holy See. It had previously been published in L'Espresso to 'celebrate' the [redacted] tenth anniversary of Humanae Vitae. Its re-publication was a deliberate attempt to forestall any change on the issue of birth control that Albino Luciani might wish to make. The article is a long eulogy extolling the virtues of Humanae Vitae. There are copious quotations from Paul VI, but from Luciani not a single word affirming he shared either Paul's or Ciappi's views. The reason for that is simple. Ciappi had not discussed the article with Luciani. Indeed as of September 27th, 1978, Cardinal Ciappi was still awaiting a private audience with the new Pope. The first Luciani knew of the article and the views it contained was when he read it in the paper on September 27th. [redacted]

he turned to page two to continue reading the article; it was, as previously noted, very long. On page two he was confronted with yet another of the Curia's efforts to undermine his position. Running over three entire columns [redacted] article entitled 'The Risk of Manipulation in the Creation of Life'. [redacted] blunt, dogmatic condemnation of the birth of test tube baby Louise Brown and of all artificial fertilization.

Again there had been no reference to Luciani. The Curia knew full well that, for all L'Osservatore Romano claims to be only semiofficial, such an article would be clearly seen by the world as being the views of the new Pope. The battle was well and truly joined.

On September 28th, therefore, shortly after 8.00 a.m., the Pope telephoned his Secretary of State, [redacted]. He demanded a full explanation of how the two articles had appeared; then he phoned Cardinal Felici in Padua where he was about to attend a spiritual retreat.

He had taken to using Felici more and more as a sounding board for his ideas. Aware that their views differed on a large range of subjects, Luciani was equally aware that Felici would respond with total honesty. The Pope also knew that, as Dean of the Sacred College, few knew their way through the machinations of the Curia better than Felici.

[redacted] 'You recall some days ago advising me that the Curia wished me to restrain my natural exuberance?'

'It was merely a suggestion, Holiness.'
'Perhaps you would be kind enough to return the compliment on my behalf. Tell that little newspaper to restrain its views on such issues. Editors are like Popes. Neither is indispensable.'

LC. 49/50/51.

JOHN PAUL: Cardinal Cantin, it is a pleasure to see you. Did Benelli tell you why I wanted to meet ?

CANTIN: Yes, to talk about running the Church's organisation for [redacted]

JOHN PAUL: *Are you interested?*

GANTIN: *No.*

JOHN PAUL: *(Surprised) Why not?*

GANTIN: *I will not be a party to a system that generates income through exploitation.*

JOHN PAUL: *(Softly rebuking) You are talking about our Church.*

GANTIN: *And the Church should use its resources to help people learn the skills necessary for economic independence, not for investment in corporations whose purposes are incompatible with the teachings of the Church.*

JOHN PAUL: *(Beginning to smile) I am not asking you to manage the Church's assets. I am only asking you to take charge of international aid.*

GANTIN: *As long as Marcinkus runs the Vatican Bank and Villot the Treasury, nothing will change.*

JOHN PAUL: *Things will change (To GANTIN) But, in the meantime, I need your help.*

BENELLI *And Marcinkus and....*

JOHN PAUL: *Marcinkus and Villot are my problem. (To GANTIN) As a personal favour to me, I would like you to accept.*

GANTIN: *Your holiness..I accept.*

JOHN PAUL: *(Smiling) Good. This afternoon I will tell Cardinal Villot that you are taking over his responsibilities for international aid.*

IGN 161

Within his first week [redacted] had given an indication of the shape of things to come. [redacted] 'assented' to the desire of Cardinal Villot

to be relieved of one of his many posts, the Office of President of the Pontifical Council, 'Cor Unum'. The job went to Cardinal Bernard

Gantin. Cor Unum is one of the great funnels through which pass [redacted] over the world to be distributed to the poorest nations.

To [redacted], Cor Unum was a vital element in his philosophy that Vatican finance, like every other factor, should be inspired by the Gospel³⁵. [redacted] was gently replaced, but replaced nonetheless, by Gantin, a man of great spirituality and transparent honesty³⁷.

The Vatican village buzzed with speculation. Some proclaimed that they had never met Sindona or Calvi or any of the Milan Mafia who had infested the Vatican during Pope Paul's reign. Others in their individual bids for survival began to filter information to the Papal Apartment.

A few days after [redacted] Gantin [redacted] the new Pope found a copy of an Italian Office of Exchange Control (UIC) circular on his desk.

There was no doubt that the circular was a direct response to Il Mondo's long, open letter to [redacted] outlining an untenable situation for a man committed to personal poverty and a poor Church.

The circular, signed by the Minister of Foreign Trade Rinaldo Ossola, had been sent to all Italian banks. It reminded them that the IOR, the Vatican Bank, is 'to all effects a non-residential banking institute', in other words foreign. As such, relationships between the Vatican Bank and Italian credit institutes were governed by precisely the same rules that applied to all other foreign banks.

The Minister was particularly concerned with currency abuses involving the illegal flight of money from Italy. His circular was a clear Ministerial admission that these abuses were a reality. It was seen in Italian financial circles as an attempt to curb at least one of the Vatican Bank's many dubious activities. In the Vatican City it was generally regarded as further confirmation

³⁵ I.e. "international aid".

³⁶ Although the dialogue is given to Gantin (see footnote below) the fact that John Paul wanted Gantin to take on the post indicates within the play that John Paul considered finance should be governed by moral and religious imperatives.

³⁷ These character qualities are demonstrated through the dialogue for Gantin on LC 49/50/51.

that the death knell for Bishop Paul Marcinkus' presidency at the Bank was ringing loudly.

IGN162

Members of the Curia organized a lottery. The object was to guess on which day Marcinkus would be formally removed from the Bank. Apart from the investigation being conducted on the Pope's behalf by Cardinal Villot, the smiling Pope, with typical mountain shrewdness, opened up other lines of enquiry. He began to talk to Cardinal Felici about the Vatican Bank. He also telephoned Cardinal Benelli in Florence.

It was from Giovanni Benelli that the Pope learned of the Bank of Italy investigation into Banco Ambrosiano. It was typical of the way the Roman Catholic Church operated. The Cardinal in Florence told the Pope in Rome what was happening in Milan.

IGN193

First to be received was a group which included the man whom Ruffini had promoted to the Presidency of Cor Unum, Cardinal Bernardin Gantin. The Pope beamed at the strong, youthful figure of Gantin, who for him represented the Church's future. During their conversation, Gantin remarked: 'It is only Jesus Christ whom we must present to the world. Apart from this we would have no reason, no purpose, we would never be listened to.'

LC51/52

BENELLI: Do you have Villot's report on the Bank?

JOHN PAUL: No. The report is important. But more important is the man. (MARCINKUS enters)

MARCINKUS: Your Holiness, thank you for seeing me (To BENELLI) How is Florence?

BENELLI: Beautiful but it is always a pleasure to visit Rome.

MARCINKUS: I am sure your diocese misses you.....

.....JOHN PAUL: *I understand you are from Cicero, Illinois.*

MARCINKUS (Glancing first at BENELLI) *Yes.*

JOHN PAUL: *That's near Chicago.*

MARCINKUS: *Yes.*

JOHN PAUL: *How long have you been in Rome ?*

MARCINKUS: *Almost twenty years.*

JOHN PAUL: *You must miss Chicago. Do you still have family there ?*

MARCINKUS: *A relatives...I try to visit them whenever I can.*

JOHN PAUL: *It is unfortunate that the Church has kept you away from home for so long.*

MARCINKUS: *It is in the service of God.*

JOHN PAUL: *What do you do at the bank ?*

MARCINKUS (Pause) *I set policy.*

JOHN PAUL: *What is the policy.*

MARCINKUS: *The policy (He shrugs and smiles) is to make money.*

BENELLI: *Is that why you sold the Catholic Bank of Venice for less than it was worth ?*

MARCINKUS: *We....the Church received other favours in exchange. If you simple invest with a bank.....³⁹*

BENELLI (Interrupting) *Banco Ambrosiano.*

MARCINKUS: *For instance, Ambrosiano; if you simple invest, you receive one interest rate a low interest rate. But if you know people*

³⁸ See IGN 30.

³⁹ See IGN/ 28-32

at the bank they will tell you if they have a particular **project**, and if you earmark your money for the **project** they will give you a higher rate.

JOHN PAUL: But, what about the nature of the **project**?

MARCINKUS: I don't ask.

BENEDETTI: Don't you think the Church should be concerned about the nature of its investment?

NOTE PICKING UP JUST OVER HALWAY DOWN LC53

JOHN PAUL: This is the house of God, not the house of Rothschild⁴⁰.

MARCINKUS: You can't run the Church on Hail Marys, Your Holiness⁴¹.

JOHN PAUL looks at **MARCINKUS** for a moment.

JOHN PAUL: I can try. (He stands up) It has been a pleasure meeting you Bishop⁴². Your comments should help me understand the audit.

MARCINKUS: (Standing) The audit?

BENEDETTI: His Holiness has asked Villot to conduct an audit of the Bank.

LC54

JOHN PAUL: (Putting his arm around **MARCINKUS** and walking him to the door.) Thank you again, Bishop. It has been a pleasure. (**JOHN PAUL** stops and holds out his ring. As **MARCINKUS** kisses it) Hopefully we will be able to get you home soon.

MARCINKUS looks at **Benedetti** and leaves

⁴⁰ See IGN 87, 120, 299 (references to Rothschild).

⁴¹ See IGN 80.

⁴² Note references in IGN (post) to Luciani's "cool politeness" to Marcinkus.

IGN162/163

It was from Giovanni Benelli that the Pope learned of the Bank of Italy investigation into Banco Ambrosiano. It was typical of the way the Roman Catholic Church operated. The Cardinal in Florence told the Pope in Rome what was happening in Milan⁴³.

The former number two in the Secretary of State's Department had built a strong network of contacts throughout the country. Licio Gelli of P2 would have been suitably impressed at the range and the quality of information to which Benelli had access. It included very well placed sources within the Bank of Italy. These were the sources which had informed the Cardinal of the investigation taking place within Roberto Calvi's empire, an enquiry which was moving to its climax in September 1978. What particularly concerned Benelli, and subsequently Villot, was the part of the investigation that was probing Calvi's links with the Vatican. The Bank of Italy contact was certain that the investigation would be followed by serious criminal charges against Roberto Calvi and possibly against some of his fellow directors. Equally certain was the fact that the Vatican Bank was deeply implicated in a considerable number of cases that broke a variety of Italian laws. The men at the top of the investigating team's list of potential criminals inside the Vatican Bank were Paul Marcinkus, Luigi Menzies and Pellegrino De Strobel.

IGN196/197

During the late afternoon of September 28th Jean Villot was given an extended demonstration of this ability that had so impressed him during the previous month. The first problem to be discussed was the Istituto per le Opere di Religione, the Vatican Bank. Villot was by now in possession of a great deal of highly detailed information. Villot himself had already submitted a preliminary report. Villot had also obtained further information from Villot's deputy Archbishop Giuseppe Caprio, and from Benelli and Felici.

For Bishop Paul Marcinkus, who had initiated the plan and played such an active helping role for Calvi in the takeover of the Bank of Italy, that chicken and a great many others were now going to come home to roost. Villot

⁴³ Banco Ambrosiano was located in Milan. Benelli, the Cardinal from Florence, telling the Pope in Rome what was happening with regard to Banco Ambrosiano is a key aspect of the scene from LC 51/52 above.

advised the Pope that inevitably word had leaked on the investigation into the Bank. The Italian Press were becoming very curious and one major story had just been published.

Newsweek magazine clearly had some excellent Vatican sources. It had learned that before the Conclave a considerable number of cardinals [redacted] [redacted] in the Vatican Bank [redacted] [redacted]. It had also, through its 'knowledgeable source', picked up the fact that there were moves afoot to oust Marcinkus. The magazine quoted its Curial source: 'There's some movement to get him out of there. He'll probably be made an auxiliary bishop.'

[redacted] smiled. 'Does Newsweek tell me with whom I am replacing Marcinkus?'

Villot shook his head.

As their conversation progressed, [redacted] made it clear that he had no intention of leaving Marcinkus in Vatican City, let alone the Vatican Bank. Having personally assessed the man during a 45-minute interview earlier in the month⁴⁴ [redacted] had concluded that Marcinkus might be more gainfully employed as an auxiliary bishop in Chicago. He had not indicated his thinking to Marcinkus but the cool politeness he had shown to [redacted] from Cicero had not passed unnoticed.⁴⁵

Returning to his bank offices after the interview, Marcinkus later confided to a friend, 'I may not be around here much longer.'

To Calvi via the telephone and to his colleagues in the bank he observed: 'You would do well to remember that [redacted] has different ideas from the last one. There are going to be changes around here. Big changes.'

Marcinkus was right. [redacted] advised Villot that Marcinkus was to be removed immediately. Not in a week's or a month's time. The following day. He was to take leave of absence. A suitable post in

⁴⁴ An interview with Marcinkus is dramatised on pages LC 51/52/54.

⁴⁵ In LC 51/52/54, John Paul does show his thinking through references such as "Hopefully, we will be able to get you home soon", rather than using just "cool politeness" to convey the message to Marcinkus. However, it would be difficult dramatically to use just cool politeness to convey to the audience John Paul's intentions.

Chicago would be found for him once the problem of Cardinal Cody had been resolved.

Villot was told that Marcinkus was to be replaced by Monsignor Giovanni Angelo Abbo, secretary of the Prefecture of Economic Affairs of the Holy See. As a key figure in the financial tribunal of the Vatican, Monsignor Abbo would demonstrably be bringing to his new job a great deal of financial expertise.

Bottom of LC 56 then cont on LC 57

The Pope moves down stage. He encounters a gardener on his knees working.

THOMAS: Your Holiness...

JOHN PAUL It is a beautiful garden. It reminds me of my old garden in the Dolomites.

THOMAS Thank you. Your Holiness. (He stands up and takes his hat off)

JOHN PAUL: What is your name ?

THOMAS: Thomas.

JOHN PAUL What does your religion mean to you Thomas ?

THOMAS: Mass on Sundays.

JOHN PAUL: Anything else ?

THOMAS: Things I can't do.

JOHN PAUL (JOHN PAUL crouches down) These flowers, Thomas, you take care of them.

THOMAS (Crouching down too.) Yes, Holy Father.

JOHN PAUL; You water them, pull out the weeds, spray for insects.

THOMAS: Of course.

JOHN PAUL: Do you think they know it ? (Pause) God cares for you whether you know it or not. (JOHN PAUL stands and gestures with his hand) What do you think of all this..the Vatican ?

THOMAS: (Stands and looks around) A palace your Holiness.

JOHN PAUL: A palace?

THOMAS: (Now uncertain) A palace ..for the Pope..for you to live in.

JOHN PAUL (Looking around) It does look like a palace..but it is a church.

THOMAS: It has guards Your Holiness, a church doesn't have guards.

JOHN PAUL You are right..Do you think this is where the Pope should live ? (Silence) Where should the Bishop of Rome live ?

THOMAS (CONFUSED)..With his people.

JOHN PAUL. Yes with his people.

IGN 11

Later he talked to the 400 priests who were now answerable to him. A number of them had offered him gifts, food, money. He declined these. When they were all gathered he attempted to explain the reason: 'I come without five lire. I want to leave without five lire.'

He continued:

My dear priests. My dear faithful. I would be a very unfortunate bishop if I didn't love you. I assure you that I do, and that I want to be at your service and put at your disposal all of my poor energies, the little that I have and the little that I am.

He had the choice of living in a luxurious apartment in the city or a more spartan life in the Castle of San Martino. He chose the Castle.

For many bishops their life is a relatively remote one. There is an automatic gulf between them and their flock, accepted by both. The bishop is an elusive figure, seen only on special occasions. Albino Luciani took a different view of his role in Vittorio Veneto. He dressed as a simple priest and took the gospel to his people. With his priests he practised a form of democracy that was at that time extremely rare within the Church. His Presbyterial Council for example was elected entirely without nominations from the bishop.

IGN24.

Vittorio Veneto, Luciani was presented with a donation of one million lire. He quietly declined the gift and after suggesting that the people should donate it to their own personal charities reminded them what he had told his priests Before leaving when he had arrived in the diocese eleven years earlier: 'I came without five lire. I want to leave without five lire.' Albino Luciani took with him to Venice a small pile of linen, a few sticks of furniture and his books.

On February 8th, 1970, the new Patriarch, now Archbishop Luciani, entered Venice. Tradition decreed that the entry of a new Patriarch be a splendid excuse for a gaily bedecked procession of gondolas, brass bands, parades and countless speeches. Luciani had always had an intense dislike of such pomp and ceremony. He cancelled the ritual welcome and confined himself to a speech during which he referred not only to the historic aspects of the city but acknowledged that his diocese also contained industrial areas such as Mestre and Marghera. 'This was the other Venice,' Luciani observed, 'with few monuments but so many factories, houses, spiritual problems, souls. And it is to this many-faceted city that Providence now sends me. Signor Mayor, the first Venetian coins, minted as long ago as A.D. 850, had the motto "Christ, save Venice". I make this my own with all my heart and turn it into a prayer, "Christ, bless Venice".'

IGN60

Remaining aloof from the wheeling and dealing, Luciani walked in the gardens of the Augustinian residence which overlook St Peter's, where he engaged Brother Clemente in conversation. Clemente was perspiring as he laboured among the flower beds. Luciani recalled that when he was a boy he had worked in the fields. 'Then I had callouses on my hands. Now I have callouses in my brain.'

LC58/59

JOHN PAUL. Thank you Thomas.

*JOHN PAUL steps forward to meet VILLOT and FELICI.
THOMAS waits for a moment then exits*

VILLOT You shouldn't talk to people like that.

JOHN PAUL looks inquisitively at VILLOT

VILLOT (Defensively) Popes don't speak to gardeners.

JOHN PAUL My father was a bricklayer. (Pause as VILLOT digest this unpleasant fact) It is time for me to visit Rome. I want to see every section, on foot.

VILLOT Impossible.

JOHN PAUL That word again.

FELICI Thousands of people would flock to see you. The city would come to a halt.

JOHN PAUL (Thinking) Rome has hospitals ?

VILLOT Of course.

JOHN PAUL It is the duty of a pastor to visit the sick and, as Bishop of Rome, to visit my churches.

You will organise visits to every hospital, every church, every orphanage.... And do not tell me it is impossible.

IGN183/184

Luciani wished to treat Rome as his new parish, to wander through the streets as he had in Venice and his other dioceses. For a Head of State to behave in such a manner presented problems. The Curia flatly declared the idea not only unthinkable, but unworkable. The city would be thrown into constant chaos if the Holy Father went on walkabouts. Luciani abandoned the idea but only for a modified version. [REDACTED] wished to visit every hospital, church and refuge center in Rome and gradually work his way round what he regarded as his parish. For a man bent on being a pastoral Pope the reality on his own doorstep presented a powerful challenge.

Rome has a Catholic population of two-and-a-half million. It should have been producing at least seventy new priests per year. When Luciani became Pope it was producing six. The religious life of Rome

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was being maintained by enormous importations of clergy from outside. Many parts of the city were, in reality, pagan, with Church attendances of less than 3 per cent of the population. Here, in the heart of the Faith, cynicism abounded.

The city that was now home to Luciani was also home to the Communist Mayor Carlo Argan - a Communist Mayor in a city whose major industry, religion, is rivalled only by the crime rate. One of the new titles Luciani had acquired was Bishop of Rome, a city that had been without a bishop, in the sense that Milan, Venice, Florence and Naples had a bishop, for over a century. It showed.

As Pia lunched with the Pope, Don Diego was involved in a loud, lengthy argument with a Curial official who refused even to consider the Papal wish to visit various parts of Rome. Luciani interrupted his conversation with Pia.

'Don Diego. Tell him it must be done. Tell him the Pope wishes it.'

Lorenzi conveyed the Papal instruction, only to be met with a refusal. He turned to the Pope. 'They say it can't be done, Holy Father, because it's never been done before.'

Pia sat, fascinated, as the game of Vatican tennis continued. Eventually [redacted] apologized to his niece for the interruption and [redacted] his secretary he would interview Villot. Smiling at Pia, he observed: 'If the Roman Curia permits, your Uncle hopes to visit the Lebanon before Christmas.'

LC59/60

JOHN PAUL (Starts to leave and then stops) And another thing: The article in the Vatican Press about birth control

VILLOT: An excellent article.

JOHN PAUL: People who read this article will assume the opinions in it are mine.

FELICI: The opinions in the article are consistent with the position of the Church

JOHN PAUL: (becoming angry) They are not consistent with my position and you know it. ... (Calmer) Before Paul's encyclical I submitted a report recommending that some form of artificial birth control be permitted in marriage. Last week the Vatican press denied my report ever existed.

VILLOT: We have located every copy. They are now locked in the Vatican archives.

JOHN PAUL That denial was a lie.

FELICI It is the function of the Curia to protect a Pope from the possible mistakes that he made earlier in his life.

JOHN PAUL I will decide if there were mistakes, not the Curia. I did not want to become Pope. The Cardinals in the infinite wisdom elected me, and I foolishly accepted. But now I am the Pope.

VILLOT: No Pope can function without the assistance of the Curia.

⁴⁶ Anger was not an emotion for which John Paul I was known. The references in IGN to him being angry are therefore unusual.

JOHN PAUL (Coldly) *It appears that no Pope can function with its assistance. It is the function of the Pope to set policy, to govern, not the Curia and not the Vatican press.*

VILLIOT: *The press was merely following the policy set out by Pope Paul.*

JOHN PAUL: *By attacking a newborn baby, a baby I had just congratulated in a letter. ~~Paraphrase~~ My church will not make war on babies.*

FELICI: *The article condemned artificial conception, set the child*

JOHN PAUL: *The article condemned birth. (Pause. Calmly and icily.) Cardinal Felici, last week you told me that the Curia wanted me to restrain what it called my 'natural exuberance.'*

FELICI: *It was merely a suggestion, Your Holiness.*

JOHN PAUL: *I want you to return the compliment on my behalf. Tell that little newspaper to restrain its views. Editors are not indispensable. (Turns and exits).*

.....FELICI: *Popes are like editors, neither is indispensable.*

IGN190

The first problem he tackled was *L'Osservatore Romano*. In the previous month, he had been given cause to complain about the paper on numerous occasions. After the battle had been won about the regal use of 'we' and 'our', which the paper had initially insisted on substituting for the Pope's use of the humbler first person, each day's edition had produced further irritations for the Pope. The paper had adhered rigidly to the Curial-written speeches and ignored his own personal comments. It even complained when Italian journalists had accurately reported what the Pope had said rather than what *L'Osservatore Romano* deemed he should have said. Now there were fresh problems of a far more serious nature.

⁴⁷ IGN has the words as those of Luciani (Pope John Paul I) and the other way around "Editors are like Popes".

A number of Curial cardinals had discovered to their horror that shortly before the Conclave Albino Luciani had been asked for his opinion on the birth of Louise Brown, known as 'the first test tube baby', an English girl recently born with the aid of artificial fertilization. Luciani had been interviewed on the subject three days before the death of Pope Paul VI but his views were not generally known until the article carried in *Prospettive nel Mondo* after his election. The hardliners on birth control read with growing dismay the views of the man who was now Pope.

Luciani had begun cautiously, making it clear that what he was expressing were his own personal views, because he, like everyone else, 'waited to hear what the authentic teaching of the Church would be when the experts had been consulted'. His surprise election had produced a situation in which the authentic teaching of the Church on this as on any other subject was now totally within Luciani's province.

In the interview Luciani expressed qualified enthusiasm about the birth. He was concerned about the possibility of 'baby factories', a prophetic concern in view of current events in California where women are queueing to be impregnated with the sperm of Nobel prize winners.

On a more personal note to the parents of Louise Brown, Luciani said:

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Following the example of God, who desires and loves human life, I too send my best wishes to the baby. As for her parents, I have no right to condemn them; subjectively, if they acted with good intentions and in good faith, they may even have great merit before God for what they have decided and asked the doctors to do.

He then drew attention to a previous pronouncement by Pius XII which might put the act of artificial fertilization in conflict with the Church. Then, considering the view that every individual has the right to choose for him or herself, he expressed an opinion that lay at the heart of his attitude towards many moral problems. 'As for the individual conscience, I agree, it must always be followed, whether it commands or forbids; the individual though must seek always to develop a well-formed conscience.'

The element within the Vatican who believe that the only well-formed conscience is one formed exclusively by them began to mutter. Discreet meetings began to take place. It was clear to those who attended these meetings that Luciani had to be stopped. They talked airily of 'the betrayal of Paul', which to certain refined Roman minds is an elegant way of saying, 'I disagree'.

When news of the cautious dialogue between the Secretariat of State's office and the US State Department began to leak to this group they determined on action. The subsequent information that a delegation of officials concerned with birth control had been granted an audience with the Pope gave added urgency to those within the Vatican who considered Humanae Vitae should remain the last word on this subject.

On September 27th there appeared on the front page of l'Osservatore Romano a long article entitled 'Humanae Vitae and Catholic morality'. It was written by Cardinal Luigi Ciappi, OP, theologian to the Papal household. Cardinal Ciappi had been personal theologian to Paul VI and Pius XII. Having from such an authority the article would appear to carry the personal imprimatur of the new Pope. It had previously been published in Laterano to 'celebrate' the tenth anniversary of Humanae Vitae. Its re-publication was a deliberate attempt to forestall any change in the issue of birth control that Albino Luciani might wish to make. The article is a long eulogy extolling the virtues of Humanae Vitae. There are copious quotations from Paul VI, but from Luciani not a single word affirming he shared either Paul's or Ciappi's view. The reason for that is simple. Ciappi had not discussed the article with Luciani. Indeed as of September 27th, 1978, Cardinal Ciappi was still awaiting a private audience with

the new Pope. The first Luciani knew of the article and the views it contained was when he read it in the paper on September 27th. When

rising anger he turned to page two to continue reading the article; it was, as previously noted, very long. On page two he was confronted with yet another of the Vatican's efforts to undermine his position. Running over three entire columns was another article entitled 'The Risk of Manipulation in the Creation of Life'. This was a sharp, dogmatic condemnation of the birth of test tube babies Louise Brown and of all artificial fertilization.

Again there had been no reference to Luciani. The Curia knew full well that, for all [redacted] claims to be only semiofficial, such an article would be clearly seen by the world as being the view of the new Pope. The battle was well and truly joined.

On September 28th, therefore, shortly after 8.00 a.m., the Pope telephoned his Secretary of State, Villot. He demanded a full explanation of how the two articles had appeared; then he phoned Cardinal Felici in Padua where he was about to attend a spiritual retreat.

He had taken to using Felici more and more as a sounding board for his ideas. Aware that their views differed on a large range of subjects, Luciani was equally aware that Felici would respond with total honesty. The Pope also knew that, as Dean of the Sacred College, few knew their way through the machinations of the Curia better than Felici.

Luciani expressed his anger at the two articles. "You recall some days ago advising me that the Curia wished me to restrain my natural exuberance?"

"It was merely a suggestion, Holiness."

"Perhaps you would be kind enough to return the compliment on my behalf. Tell that little newspaper to restrain its views on such issues. Editors are like Popes". Neither is indispensable."

LC62.

BENELLI: He called me in Florence. His voice was quiet, calm. I could feel his resolve.

CONFESSOR: What did he say?

BENELLI: That the truth is as hard to find in the Vatican as a good cup of coffee. He asked me to come back to Rome, to come back as secretary of State. He was going to remove them all, Villot, Marcinkus, Raggio. He said it was time to send people home.

⁴⁸ LC reverses the words, stating "Popes are like editors" and puts them into the mouth of Felici.

IGN. 153.

....To another friend in the north he (LUCIANI) observed.
I have noticed [REDACTED] things that appear in very short
[REDACTED] in the Vatican. [REDACTED] and a good cup of coffee.

Pages 196 to 200

These which recount in full a meeting between Luciani and
Villot that took place on the afternoon and early evening
of September 28th 1978

detail [REDACTED] the changes that JOHN PAUL proposed to make they
included removing Marcinkus, Villot and Baggio.

NOTE. That concludes the text analysis of the first act
of The Last Confession and the extracts from In God's
name that have been plagiarised.